

NANCY ANN JOHNSTON CORBETT

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(1902 -)

Nancy Corbett, a Honolulu resident for more than fifty years, describes her early education both on the mainland of the United States and in Europe, where her father was librarian at the American Library in Paris.

Mrs. Corbett tells of her first visit to Honolulu and, later on, her decision to move here permanently. Her marriage to Judge Gerald Corbett, founder of the Family Court system, her position with the Honolulu Academy of Arts, and her varied community activities including the Community Theater, the Honolulu Theater for Youth and the Honolulu Symphony are recalled.

Mrs. Corbett also became actively involved with the Statehood Commission, the Constitutional Convention in 1950, the openings of the Waikiki Shell and the former Honolulu International Center, now Neal Blaisdell Center.

Anecdotes regarding Judge Corbett, Mrs. Corbett's mother Jean Brown Johnston, and other family members and friends are shared.

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INTERVIEW WITH NANCY ANN JOHNSTON CORBETT
(MRS. GERALD CORBETT)

At her Puiwa Lane home, Honolulu, Hawaii

July 25, 1986

C: Nancy Corbett

S: Alice Sinesky, Interviewer

C: My parents were both English, but, of course, they were in this country at the time I was born. I was born in Rhode Island a long time ago. [January 7, 1902] If you like dates and so forth, I'll be glad to give them to you. But I'm glad it was a long time ago. I think I picked a very interesting period in the world to be alive. I don't particularly care for the way the world's going now anymore than anybody else does. It seems to me that it was a more beautiful, peaceful, pleasant world.

S: What brought your parents from England to Rhode Island?

C: I don't believe I know.

S: Were they married in England or in the United States?

C: They were married in the United States. I guess my father's father came to Boston, but for what reason I don't know. My mother's father and mother went to Montreal and from Montreal for some unknown reason.... You know in my period we weren't interested in our forebearers particularly, so I'm really very vague about this.

S: And it's difficult now to try to go back and dig out some of this. They didn't keep records.

C: If they were terribly important, you can find them, but if they were just among a lot of others...of course, my parents were important to me, (laughs) needless to say.

Mother went to Hull House when Jane Addams was there doing social work, which I've always found interesting because mother was kind of a classy lady and wasn't the sort of woman that you would assume would go into social work or teaching or good works, but she loved Jane Addams who was my godmother and she stayed there quite a while. She held classes in social dancing and it was probably at one of these that she met my father. At that time he was at the

University of Michigan getting an advanced degree. Then they were married. After they were married my father got his PhD. at Harvard and they were there for a while. Then my father went into library work at the Library of Congress. We lived in Washington, D. C. for a few years.

From the Library of Congress he went to Columbia University as head librarian and from Columbia University to St. Paul, Minnesota, where they were building a new library. He went out to confer with the architect, which was the foundation of a new school of thought on libraries. From there he went to Paris as the European representative of the Library of Congress to purchase...this was after World War I and there were many libraries that had been badly bombed out during World War I and they had books and manuscripts, but no place to keep them. They were selling them to the Library of Congress and Dad was the representative over there. He went from place to place to make purchases. He was honored with degrees by many of the large European universities.

After that he became the librarian at the American Library in Paris. And that's where I spent a lot time...in Paris during the heyday of Paris in the days of Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, Picasso, et cetera.

S: How wonderful! What was your father's full name?

C: Dawson Johnston. Mother's name was Jean Browne Johnston, and of course, she was tailor-made for Paris. She loved it. They were there for a number of years between wars. Long before World War II started, of course.

S: Did you have brothers and sisters?

C: I had one sister who is four years older than I. She's here and she's the reason I'm in Hawaii.

S: What's her name?

C: Dorothy Blake. She had a college roommate (she went to Smith as I did and graduated four years before I did) whose father was the president of the Bank of Hawaii on Maui. My sister went back to St. Paul after graduation and made her debut. After she'd done that for two years she decided to do some travelling and came out here on her first leg to visit her college roommate. She loved Hawaii and she got a job as a teacher and urged me, two years later, to come out and join her.

My father and mother were living in Paris. He was then the head of the American Library in Paris. They were expecting me when I graduated to go back there, which I had been doing every summer. I thought it would be fun to come

out this way, pick up my sister Dorothy, and go on around. I came out here and fell under the spell, as everybody does, got a job on Maui and taught for a year.

Then I went on to work at the Star-Bulletin. I wrote this idiotic, but then very popular page, "Shopping with Betty," where I wrote little jingles, little paragraphs, sold the space and so forth. After I'd done that for a while...I don't remember how I got the request, but it came to me through a friend...I got the request to go over and tutor the George Cooke children on Molokai.

The three younger Cookes were kept at home and tutored. The three older Cookes stayed in town and went to Hanahauoli. So I was over there for the second term of that year. Then I was married for the first time to a very jaunty newspaperman.

S: Well, how did you get from Molokai to marriage?

C: I guess I knew him when I was on the Star-Bulletin.

S: Oh, I see. How did you get back then from Hawaii?

C: When I left the Cookes, I came over here to get married and very soon we went back to the mainland.

Later when Dorothy was again living in Paris, she met a young man through some other Englishmen that she knew who had come from Hawaii on a trip. The plantations used to give their employees three months' leave every three or four years so they could take real trips. This was Sandy Blake and he was making a pilgrimage to Europe on his three months. He met his buddies in Paris and he met my sister Dorothy and he decided he wanted to marry her. She decided Hawaii was a long way away and she couldn't make up her mind to move so far away. So he left and after he left she decided she missed him and so she followed him and they were married out here.

In the meantime, I was back on the East Coast in Washington. I had decided that I was going to divorce my first husband who was a lamb, but who was rather a restless, fun-loving character. He was a newspaper man and he wanted to flit around. I had a little daughter and we wanted to settle down...me and my little daughter. I came out here to think about getting a divorce and I came out here because Dorothy was here and she was a haven.

S: Were your parents still alive at this time?

C: My father was not. My mother was and she came with me. So I and my mother and my little daughter came out here to

Hawaii. We came on a ship because there were no planes in those days. This was in 1931.

S: Did you come on the Lurline?

C: No, it was the Manoa. (laughs) It was a tub really, but I loved it and I was glad to get here. Of course, I was glad to see my sister whom I hadn't seen since her marriage several years before.

I came on a fateful day. Saturday the ship arrived. Sunday I was reading the morning paper and down in the corner on the front page was a notice of Dora Cooke's engagement. Dora Cooke was working in the education department of the Honolulu Academy of Arts. She was retiring from that position. I looked at this and I said, "My whole life has been a training ground for this job." My mother being English went to the Continent a great deal. She sent us to German public schools and to French convent schools when we were children...the two of us together.

She would come and take us on these trips to cathedrals, museums, and we lived with the people and we went with their children. For instance, in Germany we used to go to the beechwood forests for their afternoon treks and coffee klatches and beer drinking and so forth. Not that we drank beer. (laughs) So we learned the country and the people and we were talking art.

So when I saw this notice in the Sunday paper, I said, "That's for me!" And it was for me. (laughs) I couldn't believe it. It was just one of those miracles that happens every once in a while.

S: Being in the right place at the right time.

C: Exactly, exactly. I went down to the Academy and presented my bill of fare to the director and was asked to come back and meet the trustees the following Wednesday. Mind you, I arrived on Saturday, saw the notice on Sunday, saw the director on Monday and met the trustees on Wednesday.

S: Who was the director at that time?

C: Katherine Jenks. Katie Jenks. She said she was acting director, actually. Good administrator. Of course, a wonderful art collector. Jenks was her married name. She wasn't Jenks when she hired me. Can't remember her name. [Katherine McLane Jenks] A family who had lived here quite a while.

There were a lot of people after this job. I tell you it was one of those things which continues to astonish me.

S: And the fact that you were a newcomer.

C: Yes, no recommendations locally at all. Just one of those strange things that happens once in a while. But it was a godsend to me. I had no money. And I was planning on finding some sort of work.

S: And you hadn't divorced at this point. You were still thinking about it.

C: I was still thinking about it and you had to be here for two years before you could get a divorce. They weren't about to run a divorce mill out here. So that was how I got here.

I worked at the Academy for sixteen years and they were wonderful years. Wonderful staff. Small, very small in those days. I was sort of a jack-of-all-trades. I was posted in to the educational department where I made arrangements for the schools. I put up exhibits for the schools. I lectured to the school children. I took them on tours. And when anybody left for their three-month vacation time, I would fill in for them from the director to the man who managed the buildings and grounds and supervised the building staff...the Japanese boys and so on. I had a wonderful time.

Something of interest was the music at the Honolulu Academy of Arts when I first came here. One of the things they had going when I arrived, (I had nothing to do with starting it) was a concert once a week on a very fine musical instrument which we called the Capehart. I assume that's who made them. I don't know.

It was up in the clear story where the second floor now is so that it sang out really almost throughout the Academy. Mrs. Montague Cooke was very much interested in the program and she bought very fine records. Geoffy (short for Geoffrey) Lloyd who was here was a great musicologist. He made program notes which were mimeographed and handed out to people as they arrived. The concerts were free. They were given on Friday evenings, I think. Not an evening when the Academy was open, but when it was closed. They had a guard at the door to let the people come in for the concert. Otherwise it was completely quiet. We would go in and pick up a folding chair and put it wherever we wanted to sit and collect our notes and we'd sit there and listen to a heavenly concert. It was wonderful. It was totally informal. Totally in the tradition of the Academy as it then was. Open to anyone. Welcoming. Setting a standard for any cultural event.

I was there during the war and the Academy tried to do what it could in the way of arranging tours for the boys. Also, on one of the lanais of the educational wing--not the new one, but the old one--we had a sort of reading room with sofas, chairs, and we all brought our magazines so that the boys could collect there.

Then Kenneth Emory of Bishop Museum started a project to talk to the boys, particularly the flyers who were going down south to all the islands, called "Lectures for the Castaways." He recruited two or three of us from the Academy staff to help with the lectures because he couldn't do them all, obviously. He wrote a little book, a pamphlet, for the boys to have telling them what to do if they were castaways. We taught them how to make things out of coconut fronds--baskets, particularly sandals, so that they wouldn't cut their feet on the coral.

S: This was a survival program.

C: A survival lecture. We taught them to make mats--various things they could use. What to eat and what not to eat. That was interesting. We turned them out by the thousands on their way down.

I had done a lot of trooping with the Community Theater to go up to the various Army and Navy posts on the Island. I was always interested in theater so after the war I decided that I would work for the Community Theater for a while. I'd done a fifteen year stint and I thought the change might do me good; it might do the Academy good. I always loved doing plays. I started doing plays as a kid when I was in school. I loved theater. I stayed with the HCT for a few years only.

S: Did you enjoy the acting part?

C: Yes, I did some acting.

S: I was thinking in terms of the production end of it or the acting.

C: Well, I guess we all sort of helped out. Trooping around was good hard work.

S: Like summer stock. You did a lot.

C: (laughs) Yes, whatever was needed at the moment.

After I worked with the Community Theater for a while, I decided that what we needed was another branch of the theater to produce plays for the children. The grown-up plays were fun, but they were long, they were not very appropriate, they were not particularly educational, they were just fun.

S: Give me some examples of the plays that you were doing then.

C: You mean for the children?

S: No, the adult ones. What was popular then?

C: Oh, The Man Who Came to Dinner. A lot of the stuff that they're dredging up now. It was a wonderful period for plays. You Can't Take It with You. Junior Miss. Fun and they were written with that in mind. They were to be entertainment pure and simple during the war.

I talked to the president of the Community Theater and asked if he didn't think we should set up a committee and pursue this business of a theater for children. He said that he thought it was a good idea, but we really didn't interest anybody. They were involved in the plays that I've just cited--grown-up plays for entertainment. So I thought I would sort of go off on a toot and gather some people who might be interested and we'd start a theater for children.

We brought down this very fine woman from the University of Denver who was in charge of the children's theater department in their drama department. She gave classes in creative dramatics, which is another of my great loves, and she also put on plays for us. She was the one who put on our first play, Jack and the Beanstalk. Out of that grew the Honolulu Theater for Youth, which is my main contribution to the community. It's been very successful, not through my efforts because I resigned as managing director in 1966, followed by an able, theatre-wise Lorraine Dove and after her resignation Jane Campbell replaced her. Jane has continued the growth of the theatre. We keep bringing in new artistic directors so we have a constant change of pace. It's really doing very well and plays to thousands and thousands of school children. This play for the school children was sort of an outgrowth of my interest in the symphony.

I helped to start the women's committee for the symphony. I had been on the board of directors of the symphony and my husband had been president. I was interested in this and the children had never gone to the concerts except, like the Community Theater, had gone to adult concerts. The women's committee started the concerts for children. I worked on that so that when we started the Honolulu Theater for Youth, we used the same formula, asking the schools to bring the children during school hours as an educational project with educational material to help the teachers with discussion and activity material. We really developed in a very substantial way these two projects for children toward their education. I think it's done a lot of good. I think it's built audiences for the children as they

grow up. It's developed a certain interest. Look at the theater groups in town now. There's a great interest.

S: When you were doing these jobs, were they funded by someone or was this all volunteer work? How was it handled?

C: I had produced in Tenney Hall a program of Balinese shadow puppeteers called "The Red Gate Players." I did this under the umbrella of the Recreation Department and we made enough money to get the children's theater project off the ground. When we were reasonably satisfied that the children's theater was a workable project, I went to the McInerney Foundation for help and later got financing for a director's salary from Foremost Dairies. Most of the creative work was done by volunteers who loved theater and had some training in the field.

The women's committee wasn't funded by anybody but us. That was one of things I helped with. I was the second president. Dora Derby was the first president. When I took office I had very little in the treasury, since all our money was used up every year to pay for children's scholarships to study music. I figured out we had to make money some way. Dora made these fabulous muumuus. She's a wonderful woman. She can do anything she turns her hand to. Long ago before there were beautiful muumuus available--nobody made muumuus--she made these old-fashioned, Mother Hubbard type muumuus and she did it for people for pay so that she could give the money to the woman's committee.

So I devised a project that I called "Muumuu Mania," and everybody made muumuus. We got some from professionals, although there weren't very many in those days, and we had an auction. Bill Quinn was our auctioneer the first time.

S: Oh, he'd make a wonderful auctioneer. He could sell refrigerators to Eskimos. (laughter)

C: He certainly could. We had a wonderful party and we made lots of money. Everybody contributed a muumuu and modelled it. Then he would sell it and, of course, get all sorts of money. It was wonderful. We continued to do this for several years. We had to finally drop the "Muumuu Mania" because it wore itself out. People got tired of making muumuus and tired of buying muumuus. But it was a good racket while it lasted, believe me. The smart thing was to drop it before it dropped itself. [Muumuu Mania 1953-1964]

Let's see--what else--I jotted down some. Oh yes, the Massie case. That's how I met my husband...well, not met him, but got to know him really well. I met him at a party, of course, where everybody met their future husbands.

S: Shortly after you got here?

C: About a year. We got to talking about the Massie case. He was representing one of the boys who was accused and I was interested in him because he had this background. He was a lawyer, obviously. He asked me if I would like to go to one of the court hearings, and I said, "Well, I guess I would." It turned out that everybody...Mrs. Walter Dillingham, every notable would have a yardman or chauffeur or somebody go down and stand in line so that they could go in and sit in the courtroom and hear what was going on. Well, you can imagine, the Massie case is still talked about. It was the only subject of any interest at that time.

S: Well, sure. Not only were they interested from the local standpoint, but it was a chance to see Clarence Darrow and how often did that happen?

C: Not very. So I said to Gerry, "Yes, I'd like that very much." So he picked me up early in the morning and we went down the courthouse and they had policemen around and a few people. Gerry took me by the elbow in very macho fashion, walked up to the policeman and said, "My client," and we walked on in. (laughter) So I got in there and I saw...well, you can imagine this was the beginning of a beautiful friendship, shall we say. I wasn't divorced at the time because as I told you I had to have lived in Hawaii for two years before I could get a divorce. But after I was divorced, we did marry.

Gerry was the first juvenile court judge. He later established the Family Court. He wrote all the laws; saw them through the Legislature. He was down there day after day, night after night to get his laws through. He did a bang-up job.

S: Could you tell me at this point how he came to Hawaii?

C: He came because his father had worked in Los Angeles as head of National Biscuit or one of the biscuit companies and was brought down here to manage Love's Bakery. So Father and Mother Corbett came down and got a house in Manoa. Gerry, in the meantime, was finishing up law school. He got a job in Los Angeles and said that he would come down and visit with his family for a month, and like a lot of people he decided that he would not go back. He quit his job in Los Angeles which he'd never started. He got a job here and stayed here.

He went into the City and County as part of the legal department. Then he became...the job that Andy Anderson had as manager of the city. I don't think they called it that then. Then he became Secretary of the Territory during the war. Then he went into the judiciary as judge of the court

of Domestic Relations, as they called it in those days and he turned that into the Family Court so that all family matters could be handled under one umbrella.

S: He did an outstanding job.

C: He did indeed. He was a wonderful guy. Quiet, very quiet. Never went around banging on kettles and advertising himself. He developed the garden. He loved the garden--that was his favorite relaxation. He'd come home, change his clothes and go out in the garden.

S: And exactly when were you married?

C: December 15, 1933. And do you know where we spent our honeymoon? Across the Island in that big Old Crouching Lion --it's now a restaurant. It was privately owned then by the man who built it. He was a contractor. He built it for his own family to have a beach home. And we rented it for a couple of weeks. Every time I go there and have a meal I remember what a beautiful quiet spot it used to be. That's where we went. Peace and quiet. It was lovely.

S: That was like a whole other world.

C: It was. It was a long way from Honolulu. All right. Now what do I want to tell you about? The Massie case was fascinating. Clarence Darrow was not at his best, of course. He had passed his prime. But it was a subject of great interest and excitement. And people were really scared. We knew people who would go in when it got dark and lock their doors. The rubbish was picked up at night then. The minute you heard the rubbish wagon coming you scooted for shelter and protection. It was one of those hysterical waves that went over a whole town. And, of course, it didn't turn out very happily for anybody.

I got interested in the Historical Society. I was president of that. The symphony, I was on the board and on the women's committee.

S: We started talking about the symphony fund. The women's committee was built up, but I wondered how the theatre group was funded. The Youth Theater.

C: We put on Jack and the Beanstalk. I was working for the Recreation Department at this time. I guess I forgot to mention that.

S: You were talking about the transition that you made.

C: Yes. After I had run for the Senate (we'll cover that) I was wondering what I wanted to do next. I knew that I wanted to do something useful. I was lucky enough to have

Ethel Mori want me to join the Recreation Department. She had become interested in creative dramatics because of a professor from the University of Washington in Seattle who had come down to discuss creative dramatics which she taught at the University. Ethel had gone to some of the meetings and talked to her. She was looking for someone to introduce this in the Recreation Department and she thought that I might be the person to do it.

I decided to try it as it was just a half-time job. For about two months it was a half-time job and I enjoyed it very much. (laughs) But as half-time jobs don't last that way very long, it soon became a full-time job.

Creative dramatics hadn't been used here in the schools or on the playgrounds or anywhere. It was being introduced on the mainland and Ethel was really ahead of her time in seeing the possibilities. It was a very successful program. The playground directors used it with small groups and with large groups. They put on little shows at the end of their season and it worked out very well. I was glad of the opportunity.

Creative dramatics is a marvelous teaching tool with children. It frees them from inhibitions. Of course, our Oriental population is pretty conservative. Or they were in those days. Quiet. Just to get them to release their interest and enthusiasm seemed worthwhile.

S: Well, so many of them were afraid of haoles because they'd had such limited contact with them. A lot of them had only known white people in a supervisory position and looked on them as God.

C: I had hoped to get them out of this and we did to a limited extent. Another reason for starting the creative dramatics project was the Waikiki Shell. The Waikiki Shell was built for \$350,000 and was sitting like a big lump in Kapiolani Park. Nobody used it. Nobody knew who was running it or who it belonged to. So I said, " Well, let's do something." So my creative dramatics project went to the Shell. They have all these dressing rooms and big rooms around the side. We had music classes in one; we had design classes in another; dance classes in another and on the stage we had dramatics.

We had classes of one hundred divided into packages of twenty-five and they went to these different classes. We used the Shell. Like mad, we used it. Of course, that wasn't enough. I began to get all kinds of bright ideas. I can't stop with one bright idea. (laughs) I opened the Shell. To my credit, I opened the Shell. I planned projects and Ed Kenney helped me. I planned projects for six weeks. One week I had excerpts from Community Theater

musicals--that was what Ed Kenney did. One week I had national festivals with the dances, et cetera. One week I had the Armed Forces who did their marching drills from the side of the stage and went up on the stage and did the ruffles and flourishes or whatever. Anyway I did that for six weeks, opening the Shell. I got a color picture of the Waikiki Shell on the front page of the Star-Bulletin, but I didn't get mentioned myself because I asked my boss, "Please, no." I didn't like personal publicity. Anyway it was a wonderful start.

And then through my work with the symphony and the work on the symphony board I started the Starlight Concerts. Exactly the sort of entertainment the shell was designed for --except the lighting, which was non-existent. It consisted of a band of colored lights under the roof supposed to look like a rainbow. I hope they don't build that awful...

S: ...cover.

C: It's exactly what the shell is not supposed to be. It's supposed to be open air. So if it rains, tough. But to go in there and put this miserable little top on. It'll spoil all the sight lines from the back. It's so glorious to sit up there and have a picnic and relax, but that's another story.

In 1950 one of my friends who was going to run for the Constitutional Convention--this was 1949--because the Constitutional Convention convened in 1950...one of my friends was here for dinner and he was going to run for the Constitutional Convention at large. He urged me to run, not at large, because nobody thought I could win at large, but in my district which is from the mountains to the sea, this band up here, Nuuanu and town. I thought that would be fun because it kind of tied in with my theater interests. My husband thought it would be interesting for me. So I did run and I won. I led my ticket. So I was pleased with myself.

S: Did you run on a party basis?

C: No, not for the Constitutional Convention. I was a Democrat and a very ardent Democrat at that, which was not very popular. As a matter of fact, everybody said they didn't know how I kept my job at the Academy because the trustees were all diehard Republicans. But they were the kind of diehard Republicans who are generous with their fellowman. Nobody ever said boo to me about how awful it was that I was a Democrat.

The Constitutional Convention was very interesting. I had majored in history at Smith where I went to college and I was basically interested in government and history. That was an interesting experience for me and different and

another leg up on broadening the horizons. After I did that, I ran for the Territorial Senate. The Governor asked me to run.

Gerry and I were vacationing at the Volcano House and the maitre d' came over and told me that the Governor wanted me on the telephone. I went to the telephone and what the Governor wanted was for me to run for the Territorial Senate because they didn't have enough people on the Democratic ticket. Nobody was a Democrat. The reverse of what it is now. He said that there was only one person running for the Senate and that was Herbert Lee and Herbert Lee was sure to get elected because he'd been in the Senate for a long time. But they needed two more people. Would I run? I said I'd have to ask Gerry.

S: And who was Governor at this time?

C: Oren Long. I went back to the table and asked Gerry and he said, "I think that would be interesting. Why don't you do it? The poor Democrats need you and it's no skin off your nose, so go ahead." So I did and it was fascinating. And that too, like the period of my life, was a good time.

That was before television and we used to have wonderful old time rallies. We'd get a gang of singing girls; we'd get a gang of men; maybe do the hula. That would be the stuff that would elect us. Well, I didn't get elected because we couldn't get a third person on the ticket. So we didn't have enough votes. We just couldn't get one, if you can imagine the days when they couldn't find another Democrat who would run.

So I lost, but I barely lost. I lost by 3,000 votes which wasn't bad. But the main thing was that I had a lot of fun. I drove all over the Island. Spoke at various places, made speeches, and all these people would be there. Real old-fashioned rallies. Great fun.

After that, Sam King who was the head of the Statehood Commission asked me to serve. I was the only woman ever to serve on the Commission. And he asked me for one reason and one reason only I found out afterwards. He wanted me to tour the Southern states making speeches in favor of statehood because the congressmen from the South were really adamant about giving Hawaii statehood. And here I was a haole, a lady, and I spoke the King's English and I might be able to put the project across in the South.

Here again I had a fantastically exciting time. Of course, the generosity of my husband letting me go for three months was ridiculous. The poor guy. But he was always busy and he was strongly pro-statehood. As a matter of fact, he was on an early statehood committee called "Equal Rights

Commission." We made arrangements through every avenue we could. I was a member of the Business and Professional Women's Association; I was a Smith graduate; I was a member of a lot of clubs.

Oren Long was in Washington at the time and he was the head of the Statehood Commission. Joe Farrington, of course, was there as the delegate. So between us all we developed this really gung ho schedule. It was packed as tight as it could be for a little over two months. It was supposed to go for three months, but it didn't last that long. Not because I conked out because in those days I was still young and full of energy. We finished the job.

The publicity man was Jack Fox. He and his wife asked me if it would be convenient for me if they got a car and the three of us drove. So that was what we did.

S: What year was it that you did this tour?

C: Nineteen fifty-two. We were gone about two months and we really had an interesting time. Jack did a good job. The minute we got into a town he'd scramble off and do his stuff. Of course, the buildup for meetings had come from the Washington office long before.

S: So you got the publicity there where it really mattered.

C: It brought people in. We had crowds of people. They were really interested. Of course, it was a long time before we got statehood. I don't know whether it helped or not. But it was of interest to me and it was a feather in my cap at the time.

S: There was so much politics involved in the statehood issue it's a wonder it ever got accomplished.

C: We really did despair at times. The Statehood Commission was made up of a lot of interesting men. When I went to Washington, I also went for the commission on children and youth. I went to several of their meetings. Gerry, of course, always went to those so that was very interesting.

S: Although you and Gerry approached it from different perspectives, you had this common interest, the children.

C: Yes, which was good for our marriage, which was a beautiful marriage.

- S: But you and Gerry never had any children.
- C: No, we didn't. I was not able to have children.
- S: But at least you had your one daughter. And she grew up here?
- C: She grew up here and is married and living in Hillsborough--down on the peninsula from San Francisco--with her husband and she has three children who are all grown and married, and I'm going up in two weeks to visit them all.
- S: Are you a great-grandmother yet?
- C: I'm a great-grandmother twice over and about to become one three times over. I'm going to visit them all starting in Pasadena. My second grandson is working in the Jet Propulsion Lab. My granddaughter is only twenty minutes away from Nancy. She lives in San Mateo with her husband and he's an executive vice president with a Dutch shipping firm. She busies herself with community projects. The oldest grandson lives in Eugene, Oregon, and he has a string of ice cream parlors, if you please.
- S: Oh great!
- C: You bet it's great. So when I go, I have a real orgy. He started these ice cream things before this great, current passion for ice cream started. He always has long lines outside his place and he does various things for his grandfather like Big Brothers and Big Sisters which Gerry helped to start. He has a day where Big Brothers and Big Sisters have free ice cream. He's a real community-minded guy.
- S: Do you go to visit them on a yearly basis?
- C: Yes, I go up every year about now because it's a convenient time for everybody to get collected. After school starts, I come back. It doesn't make any difference to me when I go.
- S: Do they come over here very often?
- C: Yes, yes. When the grandchildren were growing up, they came out every summer and stayed with us.
- S: Well, it would be great to have a tutu in Hawaii when you're growing up.
- C: You bet. They liked it and Tutu liked it. She didn't feel abandoned.

S: One of the things I had mentioned that I'd like to talk about is the period of World War II. What you remember about Pearl Harbor Day, your reactions, how you felt about martial law, some things connected with that period.

C: Yes, it was a very interesting period. Gerry and I lived the life of Riley and always had our breakfast in bed. We had a good housekeeper before the war.

S: Were you in this house?

C: Yes, we moved here in 1937. The house was built, but the garden was not built. Of course, we made changes in the house. It had the reputation of being a little old plantation house built for the man who kept the taro gardens for the queen. We still have some taro plants. Yes, I've lived here--next year it will be fifty years. I love it and I hope I don't have to leave.

So we were having our breakfast in bed on December 7 and all of a sudden the front door--we didn't lock our doors, as we do now--and one of my daughter's Punahou classmates came tearing in. She was a little girl whose family lived up here--Worrall, owned KGU. She came tearing in and stood in the hall and she said, "The Japs have attacked us." I said, "Charlotte, don't be ridiculous. Don't say things like that." She said, "It's true, it's true. They just called Daddy." They called him because he was the owner of the radio station. That's how we found out.

Well, naturally, we all got up and got dressed as fast as we could. We got out here on the terrace and planes were flying right over our head. Right over our head. Gerry had to go immediately to City Hall. We were prepared. Gerry had packed the basement of City Hall with everything that would be needed; bandages, medicine, liquor, water, everything. He had to go down and distribute these things and, of course, they were gone within a couple of hours.

We were better prepared than the Army strange as it seems. We had blackout drills when you had to turn out all your lights and have blue lights on the cars. Or if you went out in the garden you had to have blue on your flashlight. You couldn't have lights on at all. We'd had all these practice drills. Of course, we'd made parties out of them. We'd go up and have hikes and picnics in the dark to look down on the Island and see it all blacked out. It was beautiful.

And the Academy--I was still at the Academy during the war--and we had drills. We had gas masks. We had drills every day how to put on our gas masks...

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Edgar Schenck was director at that time. He had us get up on the roof with hoses so that we could hose down the roof if it was bombed and caught fire. Our local people were fabulous. Of course, there were people who laughed and said, "You're just wasting your time." I could never understand why the services didn't have the same feeling that our men had.

Anyway Gerry went down and before he left he told me to get down the roll of tar paper we had stored so that I could black out the house. My father-in-law came over. Of course, he was exercised about his bakery which was in Iwilei at the time and very vulnerable. But he came over and helped me black out all these windows. You just had to black out the whole place or you couldn't use the room at all. We had to go into our rooms and shut everything up and roast to death. So the blackout paper was necessary. We did that first.

Then Mrs. Theodore Cooke, who lived over on the corner of Country Club Road and what was then Nuuanu Avenue in that big old house that's now occupied by some Oriental religious group, set up bandaging on the ground floor of their house. They moved everything and set up these great tables and supply cupboards and so forth. She asked me if I would come over and help organize it (since I lived within walking distance) because as soon as the women--a lot of the service wives came down for something to do and also to see each other and trade tales, but they couldn't organize it very well so she wanted my help. So that's what I did for my early war duty.

Gerry went down to City Hall and didn't appear for four days, which I knew would happen. Most of our local people did things like that--be on the job and do what they could.

Mother was here with us. We had a bomb shelter which our yardman had dug out in the back garden. A roof on it, sandbags, that bench that's on the front deck by the front door we put down there, and we had a big tin box with what we could muster in the way of food that we could use uncooked. The housekeeper and I were the only ones who ever used the bombshelter. Mother wouldn't go down. She said, "If I'm going to be bombed, I'd just as soon be bombed right here in my bedroom." That was typical of her. Sporty character. She was in her seventies then. What the heck!

We didn't go out at night at all. Then Gerry and I started having parties for the service people who were going through. We made a pact that we would never have just officers or just this or just that. We had everybody. We had our enlisted men, we had our corporals, we had our generals, we had our colonels, we had everybody and they

would come and it was good. We got to know some of them quite well--the ones who stayed. Of course, a lot of them just came and went.

We had Christmases, wonderful Christmases. And when we had the blackout, I painted a Christmas tree where the windows came together. I painted a Christmas tree on the blackout paper and with scotch tape we put little balls and angels and various little things. It was really kind of fun. And everybody was kind of gung ho. They didn't walk around wringing their hands. We were good people.

That reminds me of another thing that I thought was of some interest--our Christmas family (what would you call it?)--it was a reading of the Dickens' Christmas Carol that was cut by my mother to a two-hour reading. We gave this a few nights before Christmas and invited any one we thought would be interested.

Mother was the one who started the reading here because she had done it in her early youth when it was first written. One of her rules was that no child could attend until the child was ten years old. She was afraid that they might be bored and, therefore, lose interest. She wanted them to learn to love it as she did. The other regulation was that people who had once been invited might come any year they wanted to, but they weren't going to be invited again in case they didn't want to come; in case they preferred to go out to a gala drinking party or something of the sort. Those were the two rules.

People came and we gathered around in front of the open fire (I'm happy to say). At the end of about an hour's reading we would stop and have hot rum punch and Banbury tarts, which were the traditional things to have. Both of them of English origin. No highballs. No sweet cakes. Just the traditional hot punch and tarts. We still keep this up. My mother's gone, of course, so my older sister's taken over the reading.

S: Do you remember what year you started this?

C: We started this in 1931 when we first came out. Mother had done it on the mainland before, but she came to live with us and started it then. We've had it every Christmas since, which is quite a long time.

S: Do you know if your daughter or any other family members have carried this on?

C: My daughter hasn't, but I think my niece's children might. They love it and miss it when they aren't here, but I think it's a little bit much for that generation.

S: Maybe as they get a little older. That's when we look back on these things and say, "Gee, that was a good idea." I think it has to do with passages. When you reach a particular stage.

C: I tell you that I do hear from a number of young people who came and heard it and how they miss it and how they wish they could be here. On their Christmas cards and notes. Particularly from the Ossipoff girls. They loved it. It meant a good deal to them. To start doing it, I guess, is something else. And they're all so busy.

Returning to the World War II days. I still hear from some of the boys. I wrote to Smith College, my alma mater, and told them to let our graduates know that their husbands or sons or anybody connected with Smith was welcome here if they came through. And, of course, our friends on the mainland sent friends and relatives.

A lot of the girls my daughter's age--she was a senior in high school when the war broke out--a lot of her classmates were sent to the mainland to finish school because their parents didn't want them here. Gerry said, "We want our home as normal as we can make it. It's going to be a difficult time, let's make it as easy as possible." So Nancy stayed here and behaved reasonably well. Of course, she was a godsend to the young men, but she behaved herself. I don't know that I'd want to risk it in this day and age. (laughs) But that was a long time ago and the girls did behave.

S: And the boys respected the girls who behaved.

C: They did indeed. It was very nice and we met some charming young men. She met one fellow who was a Marine--Marines were her cup of tea--and one of the Marines that she was devoted to did land on Iwo Jima. He got wounded and came back here and recuperated. We had a big davenport in the front hall and this young man came in from the hospital and she'd hover over him and take care of him. But that wasn't the man she married.

The man she married was a Marine also. The time I remember meeting him was when we had a big party for a lot of Senators from Washington who came out as everybody has ever since to look at things and have a good time. Gerry was acting governor at the time so we had to have a party. Robbie was with the Marines and we asked a lot of them. We parked him out on the lanai of the garage slicing ham all afternoon. (laughs) He's never forgiven me for that. He's an attorney in San Francisco and they live down in Hillsborough, which is about an hour down the peninsula. That marriage has turned out very well, fortunately. It wasn't just a scrambled war marriage.

- S: I wanted to ask you what your reaction was to martial law. And your husband's, too.
- C: Oh, my husband worked against it. He with Garner Anthony and Russell Cades was among the group that worked against it. That was when Gerry was Secretary of the Territory and it was harder on him than it was on anybody. And they were violently opposed to it and they worked like crazy to try to get rid of it. There were all sorts of goofy things. Well, you've probably talked to Russell Cades.
- S: Not yet. I've talked to Judge Pence.
- C: I don't think he was here (Honolulu).
- S: No, he was on the Big Island during the war.
- C: Well, Garner was the ace fighter. In this book [Joseph Garner Anthony, Hawaii Under Army Rule], which he gave to Gerry because he worked with Gerry a lot and quoted him in his book. Then there was a volunteer group called Society Cops--somebody gave them that name--men volunteered for police duty because the police force was cut down, not cut down on purpose, but young men were hard to come by. These older men, who couldn't go to war, were able to help out.
- What Gerry wanted to do was go into military government on the island of Yap. He just made up his mind that was what he wanted to do. He went ahead, made all the arrangements, got himself appointed to it and the mayor wouldn't let him go because he needed him at the city government. That was before he went over to the state. Poor Gerry was so disappointed, but I could see their point. You could split up your forces just so far. And Yap probably got along very well without him. (laughs) He just wanted the adventure, I guess.
- But they were very bitter about martial law, particularly the legal-minded ones. I wasn't too well informed about it and I haven't read Garner's book. There were an awful lot of people who were bitter about it. And there was absolutely no reason for it. Even the military said that our Japanese were more loyal than anybody you could possibly find. And they were wonderful. All of them.
- S: Time and again I've heard that this is when they really proved their loyalty and that during the thirties there was no such thing as racial discrimination. They thought of their Japanese neighbors as being Hawaiian Japanese, not Japanese.
- C: And we were Hawaiian haoles. Real brotherhood. It was a beautiful time. I think it was a beautiful time in world history.

S: Well, Hawaii wasn't affected by the Depression the way the mainland was, which was another thing they had going for them.

C: You're right, because that was another reason I came out here. We lost all our money in the stock market crash and we managed to hold out for about eighteen months.

My first husband, by the way, was an interesting character. He was a stringer for UPI, which was why he batted around so much. Long before the war he went to the Orient to cover Japan and China. When the war started, he was caught in the Philippines and was in the Bataan death march. He survived the death march and went to prison for four years. He came back when they sent one of the big luxury ships--which wasn't a luxury ship--they'd all been turned into carriers for the troops--for the people who were in prison and they stopped here. The Navy provided them all with transportation and Franz came to see us. Of course, he called us first. Gerry and Gerry's mother and my mother and I met him here in this room. He weighed eighty-nine pounds. Six foot two. You can imagine. I loved him once. It was a terrible experience.

S: Was your daughter here at the time, too?

C: No. She was in Honolulu, but Gerry wanted her to go to school.

S: Had her natural father kept in touch with her over the years?

C: Yes, he had sent her presents from the Orient. Dolls in native costumes and such.

S: But she knew he was coming that day?

C: Yes, but she loved her new Daddy. He was wonderful with kids. And she wasn't upset at all. Gerry explained that it would be a horrible experience for her. He wanted her to remember him as he was--a young, handsome, dashing character. I don't know that she does. (laughs)

But that was an interesting experience. He went back and was hospitalized in New York City. One of my college classmates who had met him--we had lived in New York City for a couple of years--went to visit him in the hospital. He got quite an obit in Newsweek when he died. He died mostly because of his four years in prison. I don't see how any of their insides could be normal after all they'd gone through.

S: How old was he when he died?

C: I hadn't thought about it. It must have been around '50 or '51. I thought it was kind of sporting of him to come up here and show himself.

One of my greatest sorrows was that I was never able to get a theater building for the Youth Theater. I spent literally years of my life trying to get one. We got money through the Legislature. I was a good lobbyist partly because of my association with the young Oriental lawyers who had been at the Constitutional Convention. I had lunched with them, I had talked with them, I had argued with them and gotten to know them, and they respected me. I wasn't just a nameless person.

When I started the Youth Theater, I went to the Legislature and many of these same men had just gone into the Legislature. So I was accepted by them as a lobbyist. We started out getting the money for the theater. The way we got started is interesting. I was on the committee that planned the HIC (now the Neal Blaisdell Center). They had architects, and they had me because of my devotion to the theater, and they had a lot of people who met. And, finally, that was on the way. But while we were still talking about it, they had planned a little theater to back up against the concert hall--the utility rooms, the dressing rooms, the stacks for sets and so forth. The little theater could be built so that they could share the dressing rooms and so forth. The theater would be built makai where they now have an entrance driveway. And I was plugging for it. I was at a meeting of the joint committees and it was all set to go. Somehow or other it was deleted, probably because of lack of funds.

Later on after the main unit started being built, Sakae Takahashi, who was in the Senate at that time and was a very powerful Senator, asked me at a joint meeting of the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means what it would cost to have a theater built separately. I said that I didn't know, but I'd get back to him. After I consulted with one of the architects here and gave him sort of a ballpark figure on what it would cost, which was \$850,000 at that time, he introduced a bill. I lobbied for it and we got the money to build a theater. What I needed was land. Year after year after year we would get the money to build, but we had a terrible time getting land.

I was still working for the Parks Department and I suggested that it should be on park property and be a City and County facility. We would be the prime users, but other groups could use it--the hula festivals and so on. Everybody was very enthusiastic. The first time we got money was when

Bill Quinn was governor. I didn't even lobby Bill Quinn. He was a theater man.

As a matter of fact, I was the one who got him started in theater here. The lawyers were having a big party--I don't even know what kind of a party it was--an annual party, at the Pacific Club. It was Bill and Nancy Quinn's first appearance. They had recently arrived and he had taken his post with one of our leading law firms. I met him because he was interested in the theater. I said, "We're casting Mr. Roberts and you are the guy who should play that part." So he tried out for it and, of course, he got it. He was magnificent. He was born for that part. And, of course, he went on being interested in the Community Theater. He was president for a while.

Unfortunately for us, the Community Theater had the use of Ruger Theater at Fort Ruger. This was an old Army movie house and needed money for renovation. So the money for a theater building for the Youth Theater was item vetoed by the Governor much to our grief.

Well, I can see his logic--let's not have a lot of little theaters. Year after year. We kept going to the city for land and we got the property assigned to us which is mauka of Central Intermediate School and Waikiki of the Nuuanu YMCA. There's a little park in there that has some volleyball courts, but it's nothing. It's large enough to build a theater on. It's about two acres and a wonderful location for downtown. Okay, the city gave us the property and we had the money. So we start in. We have complete plans which cost us thousands of dollars which are the property of the Recreation Department. We had soil testing done, which also was a very costly procedure. Everything was all set to go. Frank Fasi was mayor. Need I say more? It was not Frank Fasi's idea. We were out in the cold.

At that point I had invested about fifteen years of my life so I gave up. We have a wonderful executive now and she's continuing to work. But I do take some satisfaction from the fact that a lot of schools now have theaters. And they're good theaters; Kaimuki, Castle, Windward. They're just great. Lovely little theaters.

S: And the new Mamiya theater at St. Louis.

C: It's very nice, but it's small. It's good really for music.

S: I wonder if they'll have anything up at the new Diamond Head Campus for KCC. They're doing all that construction. We'll have to find out.

- C: I don't know. The one at Castle is well used. They're all used all the time. The one at Leeward is a nice one, but it's a little hard for people to get to. It's kind of lost in the hills. I wonder why they put it up there? I suppose because they could get the land. The land is really...
- S: The land in Hawaii is always the problem.
- C: Yes, it is. Let's see. What haven't I told you?
- I had a good time at Smith. I was not a good student. I majored in people. I had the most wonderful time. Joined every club there was to join.
- S: Where did your older sister go to school?
- C: She went to Smith, too. But being four years older, she got out the year before I went in and went right back to France to be with the family. And that was the heyday period as I told you and there were fabulous, interesting people all of whom Dad met through his job as librarian. It wasn't as if he were a socialite, he met them and they liked him.
- S: There was a certain intellectual atmosphere.
- C: Yes, exactly.
- S: So you got through Smith majoring in people.
- C: Barely squeaked through. There were times when I wasn't sure I would make it. It's a good college. I go back there for reunions. We have an interesting group. We have twelve friends who formed a Round Robin. We have this letter business that goes around from one to the other--has ever since we graduated. We don't have twelve anymore, needless to say. Some have fallen, not fallen by the wayside, but left us.
- S: They haven't fallen; they've gone up.
- C: You're absolutely right. Yes, I don't want you to think they just quit writing. But the letters are terribly interesting. And Mother did a very smart thing. Mother lived with us. After her husband's death in 1928, she lived with me and then came out here and then she lived with Gerry and me. She and Gerry loved each other dearly.
- S: From things that I have read and heard, I gather that your mother was rather a colorful lady.
- C: Very colorful. She was a remarkable woman. As I said, she never went to a formal school. She was educated at home in, I guess, the English tradition. She was a creative

person. She didn't follow set patterns. In many social ways she set trends. She set patterns.

S: What did she do here in Hawaii especially? She came over and lived with you for all those years.

C: She lived with us for twenty-five years.

S: Did she have any particular interests herself because you were busy and Gerry was busy?

C: She was busy with people. She loved people and she always had people up here. She entertained at lunch all the time. She was one of the first people who served wine at lunch. She did that in France and she did it here and people thought that she must be an alcoholic to serve wine at lunch. Of course she wasn't an alcoholic, but this was the way.

S: This was the way it was done.

C: This was the way it was done and she set a lot of this sort of trend at her luncheons.

S: Who were her particular friends?

C: Madge Tennent was a great friend of hers, of course. I didn't bring Madge Tennent in. Madge Tennent was a wonderful friend of the whole family. As you can see this is the Tennent gallery up here. We got here before Madge was really recognized for anything except her portraits of young children. She did the portraits and she did beautiful portraits because when they arrived here, they were broke and she had to make some money and she did make money. All the people who had money had her do the portraits of the children and she was well paid for them.

Then she started doing more of her own type of painting after they were settled--her true expression of herself. We arrived at just about that period and nobody else really liked her things. Of course, fresh from Paris we were able to appreciate and understand them and they didn't look peculiar to us at all. We became great friends because she was grateful for the support that we gave her in the early days. She and Hugh used to love to come up here on Sundays and just sit because they were surrounded by her pictures. They enjoyed seeing them used, I guess you would say, as part of the home. Part of the establishment.

S: You could say that they enjoyed seeing them enjoyed.

C: Yes, that's exactly right. All the artists who were here--Shirley Russell, Isami Doi--I suppose it was sort of a mini-salon that Mother had.

S: Was Juliette May Fraser in that group?

C: Oh yes, but they enjoyed coming up here and talking with Mother. I guess it wasn't really a salon because it wasn't a lot of people, but it was just friendly. They enjoyed her. She was great fun. She was original in her thinking.

S: And having spent so much time in Paris, it was probably delightful for them to talk to her.

C: It was always of interest.

S: When did your mother die?

C: She died in--I'm not interested in dates, am I? Isn't that funny? I can't put any dates on anything. Sometime in the seventies or late sixties.

But she lived with us for twenty-five years and she had a lot of good ideas. She was a very creative person. She never went to school at all. I told you she was English and her family moved to Canada. Her father had something to do with the Grand Trunk Railway. I don't know what. Nothing very interesting, I imagine, but it was something that required brains and no effort. She was ten years younger than her sister and she was brought up first by a Scotch nurse and then by tutors. She never went to school at all and I always thought this had something to do with her creativity. Her ideas...just floating in space.

One of her ideas was, "Why don't you save these letters that come around in this Round Robin and eventually you'll have a diary," which I have. They're fascinating to read. They come around every six or eight months. We don't sit down and write the minute a batch arrives. And it's kind of a summary of what we've done since we last wrote. And I keep nagging--I've urged them to do it--but they said, "Oh, the letters don't"...they talk about the weather but they're interesting even if they just talk about the weather. It gives you some feeling about the person and what they're doing.

S: And the women are probably spread all over the place at this point.

C: They are. We've only lost three of them. One of the ones we lost has a fabulous husband who wrote a book about her after he lost her called One Woman's Way. And what it is is really a kind of treatise on marriage. It's a beautiful book. As a matter of fact, I lent it to one of my friends here who seemed to me to be having domestic problems, a younger woman. She read it and said it was the most wonderful help. Much better than marriage counselling. In a very unpretentious way it talks about their marriage.

S: This was actually a tribute to her then.

C: It was a tribute to her. He didn't have it published, but everybody, including me, who's read it wants him to send it to a publisher. I do think it's better than some of these women who tell you how to get along with your husband. This is just..this is the way it's done.

S: And from the male viewpoint it would be helpful.

C: And she wrote sonnets, too, which he included. So it's lightened up. So we have that from one of our losses. From another of our losses we have a nice chunk of capital for our college. One of the other girls was a trained nurse. Matter of fact, she was a trained nurse and presided at my daughter's birth. Nancy Jean was born in New York and this friend was in New York and wanted to come and take care of me. The baby was born, though it doesn't sound like anything very much now, and she was only five pounds. She was put in an incubator and didn't come home for three months. She was fed drops of brandy. Drops of brandy was her food for the first week. With a medicine dropper. She naturally had nurses around the clock. She was a considerable expense.

S: But worth of every penny of it. (laughter)

C: Worth every penny of it. She's a wonderful daughter. She really is.

S: All daughters are worth every penny of it. But it's interesting that so many men have told me that they've received so much support from their mothers and grandmothers for plans and dreams that they've had when their fathers didn't approve of these ideas.

C: I was very close to my father, very close. When we lived in New York City we used to go every Sunday and take walks in one of the parks all day long. Our day off. We didn't talk very much. It was interesting. I am a talker, but one of the things my husband said when he asked me to marry him was, "One of the reasons I want you for a wife is that you don't talk too much," which I thought was interesting, because I am a talker. But I would go with Father and we wouldn't talk all day long. I mean, just here and there.

S: Well, you had the sense to know when talking wasn't important or necessary. You realize the value of a comfortable silence.

Was your father still alive when your daughter was born?

C: No. My daughter didn't have much luck with grandparents. Her husband's father was an interesting man. He was the head of the Naval Observatory in Washington. This Dr. James Armand Robertson discovered the sixth ring of Saturn. That's what my second grandson John is working on, this Galileo project, to go to Saturn and find more rings. Of course, it's called off temporarily. They were supposed to launch this May, but it was postponed because of the tragedy. He's still on the planning. But my grandchildren's forebearers were all scholars, men of considerable achievement, and it's nice for them.

I don't know that having ice cream parlors is ...

S: (laughter) From where I'm sitting, it's a big contribution for mankind.

C: You're darn right. He has a boy two years old who is adopted. This was Gerry's great love and interest in Family Court. The adopted children. He thought they were of great significance. Finding them homes and making them recognize the importance of being "chosen" rather than just being born.

S: Did your husband have brothers and sisters?

C: Oh yes, he was a Catholic so he came from a six-children family. He was the oldest; next a brother who never married who was a newspaper man; next was an automobile mogul; next was a girl who died from some mysterious illness at the time Gerry was courting me. I met her, but that was all. She was bedridden. Then was the youngest.

Gerry's mother was always very close to my daughter, partly I guess because she had one daughter and she lost her. We were never very close. I think a lot of older Irish mothers are like that. They resent their son being captured by this female person who's going off with him and they'll never see him again. I've seen that in other Catholic families. She was very good to me, but not close, which was okay. I was always a busy person.

S: And you had your mother here, too.

C: And we were very close fortunately. It was nice that she and Gerry got along. She did a lot for Gerry.

Oh, he was a musician. He played the piano and his brothers and he had a combo. Saxophone, tenor sax, Gerry played the drums, timpani, all the gadgets sitting around that go whang, whang, whang, and his brother was the pianist --the one who never married. Every Sunday before we married they had everybody in the world come up to the house. It's

where 1001 [Wilder] is now, on the hill. A great big old-fashioned house. I don't know how the Mother and Father stood it. The Father probably went off and played golf. But anyway, the whole day. Beer drinking, banging on musical instruments. And they used to play at the country club. I'd forgotten about that. You know, hired band for dances.

His music and his garden and his poker were my husband's great loves.

S: After you.

C: Oh yes. He gave up poker after we got married because he said he couldn't afford to lose. So he just quit, cold turkey. Remarkable! I don't know how he did it because he loved it. He never liked bridge. Neither of us liked bridge. Neither of us ever liked games. I felt I couldn't sit down. I had to move. Good intellectual exercise. Games.

Of course, now I watch Wheel of Fortune, and like everybody else I try to guess. I'm not much on TV except for the news and I do enjoy that.

END OF TAPE 2/SIDE 1

S: You had mentioned that there was an unusual feeling here at the time of the Battle of Midway.

C: I don't know how to describe it except to say that it was kind of a pall. Everybody knew something really important was about to happen and I don't know where we got the idea. We all carried on. We went to this wedding of Ray Coll's daughter. It was a traditional church wedding. Not a very large wedding. Then a reception at their home. As we stood in line instead of the usual chatter and laughing that goes on, everybody just sort of looked at everybody else and felt kind of grim. We just knew that this tremendous battle was going on.

S: Well, how aware were people that this was coming? Was it over a period of weeks or just a couple of days?

C: Just a few days really. And people didn't go around saying, "You know, there's a tremendous battle going to be happening at Midway." I tried to remember how we found out, but I don't think that anybody said anything. I get the feeling that it was one of these waves, not a hysterical wave by any manner of means, because people didn't get hysterical and think we were about to be swallowed up.

S: It was more something that people sensed?

C: Yes, that's it. We sensed it. Nobody put it into words, but we all had the same feeling. The wedding reception went on as expected. But nobody lingered. We paid our respects, so to speak, wished them happiness and went off to sort of brood, I guess. We did find out very shortly what was going on and that it was a victory for our side. But terrific damage had been done.

We had friends on the Yorktown and when they got back, they did come up just to let their hair down so to speak. The damage officer (of the Yorktown) was a good friend of ours and that, of course, was a great tragedy. They had some difficulty in pulling themselves together.

Nobody drank a lot. Of course, we couldn't get lots of liquor. The only liquor that we had during the war was what the boys would bring up when they felt that they ought to bring something. If they wanted to drink when they got here, not too much, but everybody wanted to relax, they usually brought it.

Liquor was rationed, I guess, like gasoline. I recall one of the reasons that Mrs. Cooke asked me to help with her setup for her Red Cross workers rolling bandages was that I was within walking distance. I didn't need to use gasoline to get over to her house to help her. We were all very short rationed on gasoline.

Gerry was one of the people who rationed. The Island was divided into sections somewhat like the election sections and a man headed up each district and would give you tickets or coupons for gasoline.

S: Were other things rationed, too? On the mainland I remember meat, butter and sugar being rationed.

C: I don't think so. They were hard to get, but in those days we had good old Chun Hoon's, Nuuanu Valley, and good old Chun Hoon's would practically apportion what they got.

S: It was sort of a self-imposed rationing.

C: It wasn't too difficult. We didn't go hungry. It took a little maneuvering sometimes when people would appear on your doorstep and hope to be invited to dinner. (laughs)

S: The gasoline was the only real problem then.

C: Yes, that was the toughie because a lot of people needed gasoline to get to where they were helping. I remember Gerry's rage when someone in his district asked for extra tickets to take his family to their beach cottage on the

other side. He didn't get very far. (laughs) He probably felt that they needed a change of scene, which we all did. It got sort of claustrophobic after a while.

S: While we're on the subject of World War II, you were going to tell me a little more about your son-in-law who was in the Marines.

C: My daughter, apparently, had a great attraction for the Marines and several of them were among the 3rd Battalion, 10th Regiment of the 2nd Marine Division. Quite a few of them were ones that were landed on Iwo Jima and several of them were wounded. Fortunately, my future son-in-law was not among those wounded.

Actually, my future son-in-law was among what they called spotters. There were ground spotters and there were air spotters. I don't know how they were chosen. I know that they had to volunteer because it was one of the most dangerous duties because they had to be close to the action. I know that they volunteered, but there must have been some special requirements. My son-in-law has very sharp sight and, in addition to that, has an absolutely fantastic memory. He can look at something for five seconds and remember the ...I envy him. Of course, it contributes to his ability as a lawyer. But I think these were among the requirements because they had to go up and look and remember what different things looked like and report it.

When these fellows came back from Iwo Jima, of course, it was very interesting. The ones who were wounded and hospitalized didn't get here very fast. Robbie, my son-in-law, came out without any problems. He was not wounded at all. He was awarded the Silver Star so something must have happened, but it's the sort of thing that men won't talk about. "I shouldn't have gotten the Silver Star. Everybody should have gotten one."

The fellows who were hospitalized, when they were able to get out, came up here to relax and get away from the war for a while. Some of them, of course, had to go right back as soon as they were able.

But the whole Iwo Jima thing really came into focus when we saw pictures of the flag being raised. When the boys first came back, we weren't aware of that. They weren't aware of it.

S: Was Ernie Pyle killed on Iwo Jima or nearby? I'm trying to remember.

C: I'm trying to remember, too. He certainly had something to do with Iwo Jima.

S: I don't know whether it was Iwo Jima itself or one of the little islands or atolls nearby. [Ie Shima]

But your daughter met your future son-in-law before he went to Iwo Jima and then he came back here after that was over.

C: Yes, and he wasn't here very long. He went back and went to law school at Georgetown for his law degree. Then he got a job in San Francisco. My daughter went to San Francisco to visit one of her friends who had married and was living in San Francisco. They saw each other again. When she came back and we met her at the airport, she looked at me with stars in her eyes and said, "He's the one." (laughs) They were married about six months later after he'd gotten entrenched in his new job in San Francisco.

They were married here. They were married during a shipping strike. Shipping strikes used to be one of the horrors that we lived through and my husband was in the judiciary by this time, but the governor appointed him as the head of the mediation. He was very upset that Nancy wanted to get married during the shipping strike. He said, "We can't have very much of a reception because I simply can't bring in a lot of turkeys and hams and things for a wedding reception."

Well, she got married. We couldn't talk her out of that. And we had a reception with one ham and one turkey, (laughs) which was just kind of a gesture. I'm sure nobody expected it to feed several hundred people.

Gerry really had a rough time with that one. It went on for a long time. That must have been 1949. But this was the sort of thing that Gerry was good at. He was not excitable at all. He was able to see both sides.

Another thing I wanted to tell you. Judith Anderson starred in the Greek drama Medea for the Community Theater. She was going to close her show in New York and we got her down here to close the show here. We played in Dillingham Hall on Punahou campus. It ran for a couple of weeks and we closed it the night after Nancy's wedding and I had the cast party up here because I had been instrumental in taking care of Judith. We had kind of a rat race--the wedding one night and the farewell party the next night. But I couldn't change either of the dates. Naturally, I had nothing to say about the wedding date.

But my friendship with Judith went on for a long time. Every time she came anywhere near here, when she went down to Australia, she'd stop off. She had other friends here. I guess I was on the board of the Community Theater at that

point. That has nothing to do with the war except to an extent it does--we did play to the troops, so to speak.

The next thing I have noted is the Hemingway luau, which isn't of any great significance, except that it was a renewal of ties. My sister and I both knew the Hemingways in Paris. He was on his third wife when he came out here so it wasn't our dear Hadley who had been married to him when we knew them in Paris.

It was a woman he'd met in Spain during the war. She was a correspondent and he was a correspondent. Anyway, the luau was great fun and I'll tell you who was at it. Ernie Kai. You're going to talk him. He did a hula for us. It was a big luau and he did a magnificent hula as he does.

We saw Ernest the next day. We went out to the old Halekulani where he was staying with his wife Martha Gellhorn and saw him at the hotel. They were going on to the Orient.

S: He wasn't a frequent visitor here, was he?

C: No, except his sister lived here. His sister was married to an officer of the Bishop Trust whose name I don't remember either. I'm sinful about names. But, no, he didn't come here often.

S: Not like Jack London and Mark Twain and others.

C: And also his love was for the islands in the Atlantic.

S: You had mentioned that you remembered a particular party that the 442nd had given after the war.

C: Yes. They'd been befriended by this wonderful fellow, Earl Finch, who had a big plantation in Mississippi.

S: He was obviously a haole.

C: He was a haole; an unmarried haole and so had a lot of time apparently to entertain and befriend the members of the 442nd when they were back there in Mississippi.

S: Did they do some training in Mississippi?

C: It was either a training area or a staging area. I don't remember. But the boys remembered him with great affection because he really made the difference to them when they were there. After they came back to Hawaii after the war ended, they wanted to do something for him so they invited him to come down as their guest. They planned all sorts of special occasions for him. They gave a big luau for him and I remember this very well because there are lots of pictures in our collection taken by the press of Earl Finch

at the banquet table and the different members of the 442nd giving him leis. I remember this vividly.

He was here for quite a while and they did all sorts of nice things for him. It was a beautiful friendship. He went back home, but then he came back and spent a lot of time here.

S: Was he an elderly gentleman?

C: No, he was about their age. [Earl Melvin Finch 1915-1965] I suppose he started being nice to them out of a sense of kindness, but it went much further than that. I suppose he didn't plan it that way, but that was the way it developed.

S: Quite a bond developed then from this casual friendship.

C: Yes, and the fellows really appreciated it because they'd had some rough times out here before they left. In the early days of the war only. Of course, they had their friends here who battled for them. Stood up for them.

Amazingly enough, a lot of officers in the services who came here stood up for them, but there was a short period when they were not regarded as trustworthy.

S: I had read somewhere that the fellows of Japanese ancestry wanted to be sent to the European theater because they were afraid that if the Japanese ever invaded Hawaii, they would be in danger from both sides. People wouldn't know which side they were on.

C: That's true. That's why they sent them to Europe. It would have been difficult for them.

S: They certainly made a name for themselves so it was a good choice.

C: Yes, they had no problem over there and, of course, the Europeans are much more accepting of people of a different race. They always accepted the blacks and they accepted the Orientals in the same spirit. Much more cosmopolitan than Americans. (laughs)

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October 6, 1986

Another thing I wanted to talk about was the opening of HIC. [Originally Honolulu International Center now Neal Blaisdell Center] I don't particularly like that name for it, but that's what people seem to recognize.

S: And a lot of old-timers still refer to it as HIC.

C: (laughs) It's not a pretty name, is it? Nineteen sixty, I believe, was the year that it was opened. The Youth Theater was asked to contribute something to the opening to make it a gala. The symphony, of course, was featured with a concert in the main hall.

We took one of the exhibition rooms on the ewa side of the complex. We had risers put in. The risers were available at the Waikiki Shell and we brought them down and installed them. We were able to seat about 450 children. I worked very hard on it and one of the things I did was bring back one of our better directors, Tom Kartak, to direct the play for us. He suggested that he make a cutting of A Midsummer's Night Dream as a combination of the literary plays that we tried to offer the kids and one of the more rousing ones.

Tom had got his MFA at the University and had been our artistic director for two years. He was a very talented young man. He both designed the sets (and did a beautiful job) and designed the plays. He was very successful, but he wanted to get back to the mainland.

We were rather stunned at the acceptance of our play. We had turn-away crowds constantly for the two weeks we played there. The Star-Bulletin in reviewing the opening said that we were the star of the show. We felt extremely proud of ourselves.

S: That makes it seem all worthwhile, doesn't it?

C: It did. On the front page yet. It made it worthwhile for the school children who came in droves during the daytime. We did what we do now; play during the week for the school children and weekends for the general public. As I said, we had turn-away crowds at both of these.

After I had run for the Territorial Senate and made a good record, I was asked because of my success to run again. But I was asked to be a witness at the trial of "The Seven," the so-called Communist group who were being tried in the federal court.

I really didn't want to be a witness. I didn't like the idea and although everybody seemed to feel that these people

were detrimental to the public good, I had no real knowledge of what they were doing or why. I really held back for quite a while, but they finally persuaded me. I should say, I guess, that my husband really was the one who persuaded me because I don't think I would have done it if he hadn't approved.

However, I went through with it and was extremely uncomfortable. Mobs of people came down, of course, every day to sit in the court room and hear what was going on. I was on the stand only one morning. [May 18, 1953] When I left the court room, I was mobbed by everybody who cheered me for having done it. That was as embarrassing really as the testimony. Some of my good friends I brushed off and was terribly rude to. I didn't like the whole business. However, I haven't done many things in my life that I disliked and I suppose it didn't do any particular harm or good.

S: I had heard somewhere about a job that you held briefly with a detective agency here in Honolulu during your first visit. Was that prior to the teaching?

C: I forget when that was. It must have been a time when I was hard up for money because I was obviously looking for work. I got this job through a friend who explained that it was very simple, but who didn't explain actually what it was. I'm not sure that she knew what it was. The impression that I got was that it was buying things for a comparison type of a business. I would buy something and show it to the boss that I was working for, and tell him what it cost and that was that. No further explanation was offered.

S: Did you go to different stores?

C: Different stores. Only the stores were assigned.

S: Not a random selection.

C: I had to go to specific stores, which were obviously under suspicion.

S: Which, of course, you didn't know.

C: No, I didn't know. I didn't work very long. It must have been a matter of a few days. Until I went...it was Von Hamm Young store that I went to on this occasion. I bought a radiator cap that had a surfboard and a figure standing on the surfboard. It was very expensive.

S: These were like decorative hood ornament type things?

C: Yes, on the radiator cap up in front. I don't think they have them any more, but they were very fashionable.

Very elegant. This was what I had been told to buy. I solemnly bought it, paid for it and took it back. The next thing I knew--we had a little office off of his office--he called me back into his office. In this office was sitting this man who had sold me the radiator cap. I was asked if I recognized him. I said that I did. Was he the one that I had bought the radiator cap from? It was. Then I was excused.

I found out later what it was all about. They were trying to entrap people who had apparently been stealing from them. I resented bitterly having been used without being told. Of course, I wouldn't have done it if I had been told, and I guess that's why they didn't tell her. That and being witness were the black spots on my career. (laughs)

S: Well, I wouldn't exactly term them black spots. It's all part of living. There are certain things that we do or tolerate, get involved in--however you want to phrase it --that given a choice, we'd steer clear of.

C: I suppose I'm lucky that there aren't more. Two out of eighty-four years isn't bad.

S: Another thing we hadn't mentioned were your travels with Gerry after he retired.

C: Oh, yes. We had wonderful times.

S: What year did you start these jaunts?

C: I guess it was 1969. For his retirement party they had a tremendous luau at which we stayed practically half the night and probably drank too much. We left the next morning at nine o'clock to join the tour. The first trip we made was on a tour so that we wouldn't have to do the planning and the worrying. At that time we went to Europe on a garden tour that was conducted by Paul Weissich. It was a wonderful, beautifully-planned tour.

We went to a lot of the important gardens. We went to the Chelsea flower show on its opening day and did all sorts of things that he alone could manage to get us in on. Of course, we went to the obvious ones like Kew in England and then on the Continent. That was a wonderful treat. Gerry, of course, was an ardent gardener. That was his release from his work. He really got a great deal out of that trip.

Another trip we made was on a regular tour, a Maupin tour which was excellently put together. At that time we drove in busses around the Continent. Then we also went to New Zealand, which we loved devotedly. Gerry said he thought that he would like to spend the rest of his life there. Beautiful, peaceful, lovely place.

S: And wonderful people.

C: Wonderful, hospitable people. Quiet, self-possessed, thoughtful, not dashing around in circles.

We did a lot of touring on the mainland. What we did was get a new car when we went to the mainland and drive. We went to museums. He visited juveniles courts or family courts if they were lucky enough to have a family court. And of course, visited our daughter and her family and watched the kids as they were growing up.

One of the things they still talk about actually in my daughter's circle of old friends--the friends that she's had from the beginning of her San Francisco life--is the fact that we always appeared in one of the new model cars. The first T-bird that was seen in California was our T-bird. The first Mustang. And before that the Packard Clipper, which of course they don't make anymore. Gerry had an eye for new cars.

S: Did you pick them up in Detroit?

C: Yes, and then drive around. That was wonderful fun and he loved that. We had planned to do more of that.

S: You're lucky that you had the time that you did.

C: Very lucky, indeed. One can have a great deal less.

S: Did you drive when you went on these trips?

C: I didn't drive. He loved to drive and he drove so easily. It didn't tire him. I'm one of these drivers who clutches the wheel and worries. He was much better and much more comfortable.

S: You never liked to drive?

C: I didn't like to drive. I drove a great deal, of course.

S: Necessity.

C: Yes. I never drove for pleasure and he did. He loved it, which is why it came off so well. If he hadn't like to drive so well, we never would have made these arrangements. But it was a golden opportunity for me to go through museums with Gerry. He had no particular background in art, but his perception and his values. Educational, I guess you would say.

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THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The Watumull Foundation Oral History Project began in June of 1971. During the following seventeen months eighty-eight people were taped. These tapes were transcribed but had not been put in final form when the project was suspended at the end of 1972.

In 1979 the project was reactivated and the long process of proofing, final typing and binding began. On the fortieth anniversary of the Watumull Foundation in 1982 the completed histories were delivered to the three repositories.

As the value of these interviews was realized, it was decided to add to the collection. In November of 1985 Alice Sinesky was engaged to interview and edit thirty-three histories that have been recorded to mark the forty-fifth anniversary of the Foundation.

The subjects for the interviews are chosen from all walks of life and are people who are part of and have contributed to the history of Hawaii.

The final transcripts, on acid-free Permalife bond paper and individually Velo-bound, are deposited and are available to scholars and historians at the Hawaii State Archives, the Hamilton Library at the University of Hawaii and the Cooke Library at Punahou School. The tapes are sealed and are not available.

August 1987